



CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Department of Mobility and Infrastructure

William Peduto, Mayor

Karina Ricks, Director

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
P.O. Box 3265
400 North Street, 2nd Fl.
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

February 19, 2019

**RE: PUC Docket #A-2018-3006432 Brighton/North Avenue Bridge
Norfolk Southern Railroad**

Dear Secretary Chiavetta,

On the occasion of the field visit associated with the above referenced Docket, representatives of Norfolk Southern Railroad ("NSRR") repeatedly alleged a lack of responsiveness from the City of Pittsburgh with regard to NSRR's proposed Vertical Clearance project.

I write to assure you that the City has communicated with NSRR representatives repeatedly over the past year and it is, in fact, NSRR that has been unresponsive to the requests made by the City.

NSRR's Vertical Clearance project as currently submitted would adversely affect City streets along with adjacent residents and communities. As a result, the City has repeatedly and consistently requested that NSRR complete an alternatives analysis to determine the range of available options that could achieve NSRR's purpose and need to provide more efficient movement of freight, from New York/New Jersey to Chicago through southwestern Pennsylvania; without forcing alteration to bridges abutting park resources and carrying historically significant streets.

Among other requests, the City has specifically asked for 1) an analysis of utilizing the Mon Line on the opposite shore of the Ohio and Monongahela Rivers, and 2) an analysis of the viability, cost, and impacts of lowering the rail tracks. NSRR representatives have repeatedly failed to respond to City's requests, insisting instead that the City comment on NSRR's limited designs that focus only on bridge alteration.

The City met with NSRR representatives on Thursday, September 20, 2018; Friday, June 1, 2018; and Tuesday, May 15, 2018 – in addition to telephone and conference calls in the intervening period – each time clearly stating that the City would not accept any modification to historic streets until and unless the NSRR fairly and thoroughly assessed alternatives and presented these results both to the City and general public. NSRR has instead directed us toward studies completed by others for purposes separate and apart from the proposed Vertical Clearance project.

To allege that the City has been unresponsive is not only false, but disingenuous as it is, in fact, NSRR that has been unresponsive to the City while insisting on a course of action against the consent and wishes of the local community and City officials.

We thank you for your consideration and encourage the Commission to likewise require thorough consideration by NSRR of all available alternatives and provide clear justification for the proposed action currently before the Commission.

Sincerely,



Karina Ricks
Director

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